

SOFAS Inaugural Conference Kobe 2026

New Frontiers and Possibilities in Atmospheric Studies

The **SOFAS Inaugural Conference Kobe 2026** will bring together to Kobe, Japan, scholars, artists, and practitioners to explore the expanding horizons of Atmospheric Studies, with the support of the JSPS Core-to-Core Program and organisation by KOIAS - Kobe Institute of Atmospheric Studies. During the event, the Society of Atmospheric Studies (SOFAS) will be launched, seeking to break through conventional cultural and intellectual boundaries to study atmospheres as often hidden but powerful and multifaceted phenomena that shape human experience in their lived-bodily relatedness to the lifeworld.

The **SOFAS Inaugural Conference Kobe 2026** is conceived as an open platform to test how far the concept of atmosphere can travel—across disciplines, media, historical periods, and cultural contexts—and what new analytical, critical, and creative possibilities emerge when we take atmospheres seriously. The conference shares, as a working premise, the concept of atmosphere as developed in New Phenomenology; however, it explicitly welcomed proposals that move beyond it—by extending, revising, or critically challenging its assumptions. We regard Respiratory Philosophy/Studies and Sensory Studies as especially promising connective fields.

The program features research across the humanities, social sciences, design and the arts, as well as from researchers and practitioners who move between these domains. Amongst them, philosophical and phenomenological investigations of atmosphere and *Stimmung*, *qi* and *ke/ki*; studies of mood and ambiance in literature, film, theatre and performance; analyses of visual arts, music, sound and installation that foreground their atmospheric dimensions; examinations of architectural, urban and landscape atmospheres and the design strategies that shape them; inquiries into everyday atmospheres of home, work, mobility and leisure; sensory and multi-sensory approaches to place and environment; studies of the atmospheres of technology, digital media, VR, interfaces and AI; political, economic, institutional and religious atmospheres; atmospheres of crisis—such as pandemics, war, disaster and climate emergency; environmental and ecological atmospheres in relation to weather, climate and pollution; historical and cross-linguistic genealogies of the concept of atmosphere; and practice-based, artistic or curatorial projects that experiment with atmospheric creation, modulation or documentation.